

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

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## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO AUCTION LONGHORNS IN NEBRASKA AND OKLAHOMA

Texas longhorns, living legends of the great western cattle drives, will be auctioned at Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge near Cache, Okla., on September 21 and at Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, Valentine, Neb., on October 4, the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service announced today.

The sales of 98 longhorns at Wichita Mountains and 50 at Fort Niobrara will reduce herds to range capacities; 300 longhorns will remain at Wichita Mountains and 230 at Fort Niobrara. The auctions are annual events. Both mature animals and calves are sold.

Longhorn ancestry is traced back to Spain, but natural selection and tough terrain molded a distinct American breed, the oldest breed of cattle on the continent. Adapting to the rugged Southwestern environment, longhorns contributed significantly to economic development of post-Civil War Texas.

They became almost extinct after being replaced as beef producers by meatier breeds about 1900. The herd at Wichita Mountains was developed in 1927 and, nine years later, six calves were moved to Fort Niobrara to start another herd.

Anyone wishing additional information on these sales should write to the Refuge Manager, Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Cache, Oklahoma 73527 or Refuge Manager, Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, Hidden Timber Route, Valentine, Nebraska 69201.